

of all, the obstruction which these many dams would have presented to the raftsmen would not have been tolerated by the prosperous and influential lumbering interests, who for the past fifty years had enforced their will upon these valleys. Wright proposed to extend the canal up the Lackawaxen to the present site of Prompton, thence up Vanorba Brook to Keens' Pond, near the foot of the Moosic Mountains at Rixe's Gap, but Colonel Sullivan, who seems to have been far more enthusiastic than Wright, was all for carrying the canal on over the Mountains directly to the mines. He reported the nearest coal beds to be "within five miles of the proposed head of canal navigation, between which and the coal there is no mountain; the chain being broken by Rixe's Gap, which appeared to me to be about half a mile in width—and it appears to me that if the Lackawanna should not be found capable of felling a canal through the gap, that the ground would be very favorable to an iron railroad, as they are formed in England." It is evident that this was no passing remark, for he later reiterated "From my knowledge of the place, I am able to say there is no mountainous land intervening between the Lackawaxen and the coal formation and can probably be reached by a continuation of the canal, by feeding from some distance up the Lackawanna."

A great deal of confidence seems to have been placed in Colonel Sullivan, who was an engineer of experience and it seems incredible that he could have made such a misstatement, for the lowest point in the gap was over six hundred feet above Keen's Pond, less than three miles away, and a thousand feet above the mouth of the Dyberry Creek, where the canal finally terminated. Requiring as it did one lock for each twelve feet of rise, it can readily be seen that his proposal was impossible.

#### "Hydraulic Lift" Proposed

Sullivan had, if nothing else, a vivid imagination, for as an alternative to continuing the canal across the Moosic Mountains, he favored the scheme of moving the boats directly to the mines over the railroad but his most interesting proposal was the "Hydraulic Lift" which was to do away with canal locks. The "lift" was to be operated by filling or emptying the "transit" in which the boat was carried. He explains that if the boat is to be lowered, it is merely floated into the transit which remained full of water, and thus when the brakes were released the whole thing descended by reason of its own weight. To raise a boat from the lower level the boat was to be floated into the transit, the water allowed to flow out, leaving the

combined weight of the boat and transit less than that of the counter balances, causing it to rise to the upper level where water was again admitted and the boat floated out.

Sullivan contended that his "Hydraulic Lift" was best suited for use in mountainous country such as that to be traversed by the new canal. He also argued his lift would conserve water in dry seasons, but there were more conservative men planning the canal and the Colonel and his schemes were soon forgotten.

The Lackawaxen Coal Mine and Navigation Company and the Delaware and Hudson Canal Company working together, established headquarters in "Sykes" Hotel and advertised that the charter of the Delaware & Hudson Canal Company "May be seen at the bar of the Tontine Coffee House; or if any person should wish to examine it with more mature deliberation than so public a place will admit, he may procure a copy for that purpose, by calling upon a committee of the Lackawaxen Company, at Sykes' Hotel." One pamphlet which was published during 1824 pointed out that the charter granted to the Delaware & Hudson Canal Company by the State of New York was perpetual, but they neglected to point out that the charter granted to the Lackawaxen Company expired in thirty years, at which time the rights reverted to the State with no provision for renewal by the company. This restriction was to cause the managers a great deal of worry in later years, but it was apparently thought best to keep it from the investing public at the time.

#### Coal Burning Exhibit

A grate in which anthracite coal could be burned was set up in a fireplace at the Tontine Coffee House and the public invited to come and see the "fine burning qualities of the Lackawaxen Coal" a small quantity of which had been rafted to Philadelphia where it was transferred to the sloop "Toleration," which reached New York City on December 10, 1824.

Subscription books for the purchase of stock in the Delaware & Hudson Canal Company were opened on the 7th of January, 1825, and by two p. m. that day all of the stock had been sold. According to advices given out by representatives of both companies, later in 1824, consolidation of the two companies had also been planned for January 7, but these plans seem, for some reason, not to have been carried out and the merger was not completed until June, 1825, when the Delaware and Hudson Canal Company succeeded to the rights and privileges originally granted to Maurice Wurts.

The Wurts brothers, of the Lackawaxen Coal Mine & Navigation Company, which was the same thing, were to receive \$40,000 for the mines and their franchise but this was not paid until late in 1827, at which time they received the equivalent in stock.